Cambridge GLBT Commission February 25, 2008 meeting minutes

- I. Call to Order, Appointment of Minutes Taker, Recording Roll
 Commissioners present: Colby Berger, John Gintell, Priscilla Lee, Robert Parlin,
 Lesley Phillips, Jeff Walker. Priscilla Lee recorded these minutes.
- II. **Motion to Accept Agenda:** Passed after the addition of item re: House Bill 1722 (Gender Discrimination/Hate Crimes)
- III. Motion to Accept minutes from January 2008 meeting: Passed
- IV. Committee reports and Updates on Tasks:
 - 1. Recruitment and appointment of new commissioners There are at least twenty applicants for the open commissioner slots. Applicant letters and resumes will soon be available for review by interested commissioners at Jeff's workplace (Cambridge Health Alliance at 119 Windsor St.) Jeff will let us know when the stack is ready for review and we'll get our suggestions/comments back to City Hall with a quick turnaround (~2 days) for the City Manager's attention. We hope that these appointments will be made quickly. Regardless of appointment, all applicants will be invited to attend our next meeting on March 20th. They will be invited via mail or email from the City Manager's Office. Jeff and Colby will draft the invitation.
 - 2. Report on commissioners meeting with Mayor Simmons Feedback as follows:
 - Executive Director position for GLBT commission In order to lay the groundwork for our projects ahead (and in particular a major project focused on Senior GLBT issues,) it is imperative that we secure paid staffing, preferably in the form of an Executive Director. Mayor Simmons will ask the City Manager to establish such a position.
 - Supporting Project 10 East in the Budget Process Mayor Simmons will ask Mark McGovern and Patty Nolan (chairs of the Budget subcommittee) to take a look at the current P10East coordinator role and consider the possibility of expanding the role and the position. She will also ask them to look at other line items with the intent of addressing CRLS Principal Chris Saheed's concerns regarding racial and ethnic diversity issues at the high school.
 - Supporting Welcoming Schools in the Budget Process Mayor Simmons says that securing an essential materials budget for Welcoming Schools will not be a problem.
 - Police Department A majority of Cambridge police officers participated in the GOAL-led GLBT awareness trainings last year and around 100 more will receive the training this Spring (scheduled for May '08).

- Joanne Shapiro has requested, but not yet received, a summary feedback report from GOAL. We're looking forward to receiving it too.
- Pride Brunch Mayor Simmons wants to continue the annual brunch and offers her office as support. Commissioners have agreed to meet with the Mayor again on this topic after the new commissioners have been appointed. We discussed the possibility of seeking community/corporate sponsors for the event, of holding the brunch on Sunday rather than Saturday, of awarding "special recognition" to community allies as well as to former commissioners, and of trying to have fewer speeches and more of a party feel to the event, perhaps outdoors (weather permitting).
- OutFest and GLBT Town Meeting We discussed having a celebration on National Coming Out Day (Oct 11) – again a wish for something more celebratory with fewer speeches. We also talked about holding another GLBT Town meeting- perhaps around the 5-year anniversary of the first one (Feb 2009).
- Future meetings Mayor Simmons has been and continues to be a strong supporter of our commission and its efforts. She submitted the original order for the Feb '04 GLBT Town Meeting, the order to establish the GLBT Commission and, most recently, the order to formalize this commission. Commissioners hope to schedule meetings with Mayor Simmons on a consistent basis.

3. HB1722: MA Transgender Civil Rights Legislation

Legislation to outlaw discrimination in Massachusetts on the basis of "gender identity or expression" was introduced Jan 10, 2007, by lead sponsors Representative Carl Sciortino and Representative Byron Rushing. House Bill #1722, "An Act Relative to Gender-Based Discrimination and Hate Crimes", sends a clear message that transgender and gender non-conforming people in our communities should be able to work, go to school, and live without fear. This bill concerns Gender Discrimination and Hate Crimes.

The Commission votes unanimously to support that protection of Transgender individuals be properly added to existing laws. Lesley will offer testimony at the upcoming State House hearing and will represent the commission. Colby may be able to join, depending on the timing of testimony.

The hearing on House Bill 1722 is scheduled for Tuesday, March 4 at 1 PM.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our next meeting is scheduled for March 20th from 5:30 - 7 PM in the second floor conference room at 119 Windsor Street. Applicants for the open commissioner slots will be invited to attend.